



Pollution Prevention for Automotive Body Repair and Vehicle Washing Industries



What is Stormwater Pollution?

The Town of Westminister, like many municipalities across the country operates a “Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System” or MS4, which is designed to convey discharges that are

composed entirely of stormwater, and is separate from the wastewater sewer system that conveys discharges from individual homes or businesses. It is important to note that MS4 stormwater discharges receive no formal treatment and flow directly into our community’s stormwater drainage system and into our local waterways.

Poor training and material management practices at automotive repair industry locations can cause pollutants such as waste oils, solvents, detergents, and other waste to enter our stormwater system. These pollutants can build up in stormwater lines and cause blockages, negatively impact the operation of stormwater retention areas and drywells, or degrade water quality of our local waterways. Pathways of this pollution include the direct pouring or dumping by ill-trained employees, poor cleaning habits, improper storage of chemicals and waste, and poor maintenance of waste containers.

Recommended Practices for Automotive Body Repair and Vehicle Washing Industries

Most of the Best Management Practices (BMPs) identified below are non-structural and cost little or nothing to implement. This listing is not all inclusive and other non-structural and structural BMPs can be implemented to further reduce the potential of contributing to stormwater pollution.



Chemical and Waste Storage

Do...

- Position dumpsters away from areas that storm water flows; inspect regularly for leaks/spills, and keep dumpster lids closed.
- Provide cover and secondary containment for outdoor storage of bulk detergents, solvents, paints, and waste products.
- Store all waste products in properly labeled, covered and water-tight containers.
- Properly dispose of, or professionally clean, items that have come in contact with any chemicals, paints, or waste residues.
- Minimize paint and thinner waste by calculating only what is required to do each job.
- Inspect and maintain bulk storage tanks, piping, couplings, hoses, etc. regularly.
- Properly dispose of or recycle solid and liquid waste products.
- Maintain an organized inventory of materials stored at the facility.
- Maintain organized disposal and recycling records of all waste products.

Don't...

- Position dumpsters near storm water flow areas or ignore leaks by frequently cleaning up after leaking dumpsters, or leave lids open.
- Store bulk detergents, solvents, paints, or waste products in areas that would allow spills to enter into the storm water system.
- Store waste in unidentifiable containers or those that cannot be effectively sealed.
- Store or pile scrubber heads, sponges, rags and shop towels on the ground or uncontained outdoor areas susceptible to storm water.

- Generate more waste than is necessary or disposing of excess in the sanitary sewer or storm water system.
- Waste money by allowing storage and applicator housings to leak product.
- Dispose of cleaning and repair waste products in the sanitary sewer or storm water system.
- Allow unnecessary inventories to build up or age such that the product containers may fail.
- Allow the disposal of waste products to occur undocumented or without supervision.

Body Repair and Painting Areas

Do...

- Conduct all sanding and painting indoors.
- Use dry methods of collecting sanding dust and/or vacuum sanding equipment to reduce air-borne dust.
- Properly dispose of water and sludge generated in wet sanding operations. (Note: this waste is often high in metals)
- Spray paint indoors and preferably in a paint booth.
- Sweep or vacuum shop floors regularly. Use a bucket and mop to clean the shop floor.
- Promptly transfer used solvents into an appropriate container in a manner that reduces the chance of spilling.
- Cleanup solvent, paint, and other chemical and waste spills promptly.
- Keep absorbent cleanup materials readily accessible in all work areas.
- Properly contain and dispose of used absorbent materials as required.

Don't...

- Sand outdoors where dust and paint particles can enter the stormwater system.
- Spray sanding areas down with a hose or use a bucket and mop without first sweeping up as much debris as possible.
- Pour water generated from wet sanding operations onto paved surfaces or into the storm water system.
- Allow paint overspray to enter the stormwater system.
- Spray water onto the shop floor allowing it to flow outdoors and into the storm water system.
- Store open containers of fluids where they can be knocked over or transfer fluids in a manner that may create a spill.
- Allow spilled materials to be tracked out of or throughout the shop.
- Waste time responding to a spill or leak by looking for the appropriate cleanup materials.
- Pile spent absorbent materials on the ground or dispose of them in a dumpster.

Automobile Washing

Do...

- Conduct all vehicle washing on a wash pad or in an area where all wash water drains to an approved sanitary sewer connection or can be collected for disposal.
- Use water only in pressure washers; or, if necessary, use a water and biodegradable soap mixture. Clean such that no overspray leaves the wash pad area.
- Conduct acid-washing and engine degreasing activities in areas that the wash water can be contained. Treat or dispose of properly.
- ✓ Clean and maintain oil/water separators, sand filters, and sediment traps regularly.

Don't...

- Wash any vehicles, even if no detergents are used, in an area that will allow the wash water to drain to the stormwater system.
- Use potentially hazardous detergents or solvents in pressure washers, or spray in a manner such that overspray may be discharged to the stormwater system.
- Allow any wash water from acid-washing activities or degreasing solvents to enter the stormwater system or the sanitary sewer.
- Wait to maintain these structures until they overflow or backup.

Staff Training

Do...

- Assist your staff in determining the proper disposed method by making MSDS sheets available.
- Train employees and proper storage and spill cleanup procedures.
- Post a listing of Best Management Practices where all employees can view for reference.

Don't...

- Expect your staff to “know” the proper disposal requirements for every compound used in the shop.
- Assume your staff knows or will remember these procedures without the proper training.
- Expect your employees to remember the proper ways of cleaning and handling waste.

*See the Recommended Practices for Cleaning Outdoor Areas.

Facts

- It is easier and cheaper to prevent stormwater pollution than to clean it up.
- Your facility is not “safe” from stormwater pollution regulations.
- Most stormwater structures require regular maintenance. Taking steps to reduce pollutants in stormwater will help keep stormwater structures in good operating condition.
- Allowing chemicals, trash, debris, sediment, and oil or grease wastes/residues to enter the stormwater system has a negative effect on the operation of stormwater structures.
- A malfunctioning stormwater structure is the problem of everybody who uses it.